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The Economic Value of Spare Time

This sojourn has been almost upon our nation during the past week by the waste of time involved in the observance of Columbus Day, which seems to us an unnecessary holiday, as well as by the retarded business activity caused by the national presumption, day and night, in the championship baseball games.

F. W. Taussig, Professor of Economics at Harvard University, has written a most interesting book called "Principles of Economics." In it, he says, on page 71,—"In the very earliest stages of the formation of capital, surplus showed itself directly in the fact of spare time. The first implements of some kind brought must have been fashioned during his hours when labor did not need to be given for the satisfaction of imperative wants; when there was a chance of doing something else."

Traveling on a crowded railway between two great cities, one cannot fail to be impressed, as we have been, by the speedily waste of time there to be observed. Recently we were on a train carrying about one hundred persons. Of these, by actual count, six were reading newspapers or magazines, and eight were playing cards. The remainder, as far as one could judge, were absolutely idle, both mentally and physically.

If it is true that "time is money," and wealth the product of the spare time not required for the satisfaction of the imperative wants, how enormously rich we might become, both individually and collectively, if we took care of our spare time as we do our spare cash.

Anstey, an English writer with a fantastic imagination, was the author of two celebrated books. One, called "Vice Versa," described a situation in which the child had become the parent and the parent the child, each thereby being brought to a realization of the other's point of view. The second book was called "Tourmalet's Time Checks," and was the story of a "Time-Law" in which a person, finding himself with time for which he had no immediate employment, deposited it and thereafter checked it out when needed.

How many realize that within themselves they are each provided with a "measuring stick" in which deposits may be made by the simple expedient of utilizing every minute of their existence.

Gedhe says that

"It is not passing life's busy career, Rev., is the losing of self for one's sphere."

It is not such idleness and sheer monotony that recreation and rest are to be had. It is rather through the change of activity, mental and physical, or better still, a change from mental to physical activity, or vice versa.

There is a widely prevalent idea that this change in habitual must be a change from penitence to unproductive activity. To the average mind a vacation or a holiday suggests a period to be spent either in sheer idleness or in the doing of something which will not generally be productive of energy, because involving excessive eating, drinking or loafing, is not most encouraging. The true purpose of a vacation is to promote physical and mental health and strength. This is never done by idleness and it is appalling to think how much time is absolutely wasted in unproductive idleness.

There are 168 hours in a week, these, allowing for the more unusual Saturday half-holiday, the average person is supposed to work fifty-six, or one-third. Most of us work far less. Fifty-six more are usually required for sleep, leaving remaining one-third, or fifty-six,

for eating and recreation. It is almost impossible for any one to be able to employ three hours a day in eating. Even if we were all Fischerites, one-half this time would satisfy our normal food requirements.

A very simple calculation makes it apparent that the average individual is wasting at least forty-five hours out of every 168 that he lives, or at least in doing something which, if not injurious, is certainly unproductive.

What an enormous advance in the economic progress of the world would result if this 25 per cent of wasted time were utilized. We have sometimes been very much impressed upon entering a barber shop, by the time wasted by American men in waiting to be shaved. There are probably 2,000,000 "chavalees" in America, and each one of them loses only ten minutes a day for a year in waiting his turn in a barber shop, the aggregate time thus wasted equals 114,155 years of time. In other words, reckoning a man's working time as fifty-six hours a week, there is annually wasted in the barber shops of America, energy equivalent to the labor of 114,155 men working for three years.

The thought that spare time is economic wealth, can be applied to hundreds of other "time leaks" in our lives, with salutary effect. We need not "rest by quitting life's busy career." For all of us a form of rest is to be found that will better fit us for the activities of our chosen sphere. Our vocation is our chosen and regular employment. Our avocation is something that we do besides. Both of them presupposes activity, mental or physical. They should complement each other.

The clerk, whose daily task limits his vision to the ledger or the counter, may find great enjoyment and quickened intellectual activity, like the old book-keeper in "Pru and I," by reading of foreign travel. The merchant or the man of affairs can do much good for himself and others by devoting his leisure to the promotion of civic welfare, the lawyer in the study of mathematics, and the mathematician in the study of law.

Lewis Carroll, the author of that exquisite little piece of fiction, "Alice in Wonderland," was one of the greatest professors of mathematics in England, and Whitney, the inventor of the cotton gin, was by vocation, first in a family of a dozen cotton planters.

There is, in fact, no little mental satisfaction to be derived in selecting an avocation that is as arithmetic as possible to one's vocation and the more difficult the arithmetic, the greater the benefit.

Professor Munsterberg not so long ago wrote an essay upon "Getting the Second Wind." In it, he stated that the man by his side, which in racing generally precedes the "second wind," was due to the fact that the diaphragmatic muscles brought into action by deep breathing, are so little used that the unaccustomed demand upon them causes pain. "Generally," said he, "we do not utilize one-tenth of the breathing capacity of the lungs, & when involves deep breathing, as for the average individual the unaccustomed lung expansion means pain from pain. So it is in life."

The waste of time is so universal as to have become a habit sometimes requiring painful effort. It is no less beneficial for that reason. In America the Civil War with which Nature has endowed us, and the comparative spaciousness of our population has made life easy for most of us. We have learned to live with a minimum of effort and now we are

complaining of the high cost of living and of misgovernment, largely because, as individuals, we are wasting time that might be healthfully directed toward reducing the cost of living, and to a personal interest in the conduct of government, which would make our public servants more

To Fight the Bell Weevil

E. H. CRIPPEN:

As Field Agent of the Department of Farm Improvement Work for the Southern Railway and Associated Companies, I wish to give the following suggestions to our farmers in preparing for the fight against the bell weevil:

In this territory, which is now infested by the weevil, the most important factor in winning the fight against its ravages in 1914, is the cleaning and preparing the bolls. Even in the cold weather we have had, all the weevils have not gone to their hibernating quarters, and many thousands yet remain in the halffopened and unopened bolls.

I would not advocate the burning of the old stalks for two reasons:

First. In attempting to eat, rake and burn the stalks you will leave thousands of bolls scattered over the land and the weevil will remain in them until a favorable time—say, a sunny day—when they will fly out and have other quarters more favorable for winter hibernation.

Second. In burning the old stalks you lose too much valuable fertilizer, in organic matter, and other requisites which are worth too much to your land to leave them go up in flames.

It is a known fact that organic matter and nitrogen are the most needed of all things in the soils of this section, and it must be admitted that there has been little done, so far, to remedy this need. This being the fact, I do not think it is the best thing to do when we advise the farmer to burn the cotton stalks if here is a possible way of getting him to turn them under the ground, for when he burns the stalks many of the weevils will warm up before the fire strikes them and fly away to another hiding place and pass the winter.

More than this, on one acre of ground that has grown one bale of cotton there are 200 pounds of cotton stalks, on an average. These stalks contain 51 pounds of nitrogen, 3 pounds of phosphorus and 30 pounds of potash. Figuring nitrogen at the present cost of 22.12 cents per pound, phosphorus at 5 cents per pound, and potash at 6 cents per pound, it would take \$1.53 worth of commercial fertilizer in a year to replace the loss incurred by the burning of these stalks. As far as we have the bunch of the decaying stalks in our soil and this is one of the greatest needs, for with organic matter we cannot derive the benefit from our cotton crop fertilizers.

To place these stalks under it is best to first run over them with a corn stalk chopper, or disc harrow and cut them into small pieces. Follow this with a two-horse tucker, similar to a mowing plow and bury the stalks a foot or 6 inches deep. (A very effective ditch will never escape.) I would be well then that you have your land prepared to put a crop of buttes which will prevent it from washing off during rains, as will also give a good crop of much-needed grain. Corn should be treated the same way for the same reasons.

If these suggestions are followed you will have saved on a go-around to make cotton gather but we do not dream in 1914. I will write to give further instructions in this work in the spring of 1914, when the adult weevils come out of hibernation.

E. E. BURROWS, Field Agent, Department of Farm Improvement Work, M. & O. and Southern Railroads.

faithful to their duties.

If the time now wasted were saved in healthful and productive employment and in the stimulation of mental activities, the effect upon the cost of living, and upon the administration of government would be almost immediately apparent.—Theo. H. Price in Commerce and Finance Oct. 15.

AN OUTLET OF CHARITY?

"Yes, I think it is right to give something to others. So I give a little to everyone in my church. I try to be charitable." Is the charwoman of a church? Is God a person? Does he appreciate us, gives every blessing, has no claim on us? The author is. Lead said the fullness thereof." Can man wear that which belongs to God and then talk about giving to God as an object of charity, bringing tenant talking about contributing a little rent money to his landlord as a matter of charity. Yet many tenant God's possession and then demand His rent—the tithe, and then speak of giving a little to charity. Why is this? Dishonesty entitles many to gifts.

—Ex.

Some one has well said: "It is not what you eat, but what they digest makes them strong. It is not what they gain, but what they save, that strengthens them. Life is not what we read, but what that remains, that makes them learned. It is not what they possess, but what they practice, that makes them righteous. These are very plain and innocent truths, easily held by children, speak the truth, look up, and rejoice."

—Pastor Christian Advocate.

Easy Task.

There are two things which I am confident I can do very well; one is an introduction to any literary work, stating what it is to contain and how it should be executed in the most perfect manner.—Samuel Johnson.

GOLDEN TRUTHS

The late Robert C. Ogden, merchant, philanthropist and millionaire, whose life was mainly successful from every point of view, left behind him in writing this set of good and true rules:

Do not mistake a prejudice for a principle.

Be energetic, wide awake, pushing, but be patient.

Use the book of Proverbs as a guide in business.

Honest woman desired.

Believe in yourself, then other people will believe in you.

A vigorous, healthy man has only one right in the world, only one thing to demand, and that is a chance to work.—Houston Gable.

A BRIGHT BOY

Recently a good mother and little son walked into a grocery store. The boy, like any boy, could not help seeing the large red, delicious, juicy apples. Time to his mother he soon let his wants be known. His mother restrained his taking one by "O, no son you mustn't do that." The girl, who is one of our big headed boys, said "O, Meg, Jim, let him have it." Promptly the little fellow seized the situation, and the apple "Now," said the anxious mother, "John Harry, what ought you to say to the girl?" Promptly he replied, "Gimme one for sister."

We may laugh at his innocence, but how beautiful was the honest expression of those words, and how well many of his seniors might learn the lesson of thoughtfulness. "A little child shall lead them"—Oklahoma Methodist.

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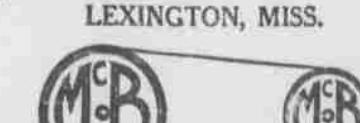
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